

## 2012 FALL program guide

# GET YOUR GAME ON!



It's finally here!  
Join the fun...  
**November 1, 2012**  
through  
**February 28, 2013**

**B I N G O • B L I T Z**



### Maricopa County

Parks and Recreation Dept.  
234 N. Central Ave., Suite 6400  
Phoenix, AZ 85004  
(602) 506-2930

[www.maricopa.gov/parks](http://www.maricopa.gov/parks)

[www.twitter.com/MCParks](https://twitter.com/MCParks)

[www.facebook.com/maricopacountyparks](https://www.facebook.com/maricopacountyparks)

**B**ack by popular demand...the Fall Challenge has returned! Last year we challenged you to hike 100-miles in three months and you rose to the challenge.

This year, you'll be asked to solve puzzles, participate in activities, and truly experience the beauty of the Sonoran desert. So round up your friends, print out your bingo cards and prepare for a fun fall of outings.

Bingo cards may be picked up at a County park or downloaded at:

[www.maricopa.gov/parks/fallchallenge.aspx](http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/fallchallenge.aspx)

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## ABOUT US

From hiking on a barrier-free trail, to horseback riding along a creek, Maricopa County Parks offer visitors the best of the Sonoran Desert. At approximately 120,000 acres, Maricopa County is home to one of the largest regional park system in the United States. All trails within the Maricopa County Park System are for non-motorized use only. Ten parks in the system circle the metropolitan area and all are within a 45-minute drive from downtown Phoenix.

- **Adobe Dam Regional Park**  
23280 N. 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue  
Glendale, AZ 85310  
(623) 465-0431  
<http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/adobe/>
- **Buckeye Hills Regional Park**  
26700 W. Buckeye Hills Drive  
Buckeye, AZ 85326  
(623) 932-3811  
<http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/buckeye/>
- **Cave Creek Regional Park**  
37900 N. Cave Creek Parkway  
Cave Creek, AZ 85331  
(623) 465-0431  
[http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/cave\\_creek/](http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/cave_creek/)
- **Desert Outdoor Center**  
41402 N. 87<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Peoria, AZ 85383  
(602) 372-7470  
<http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/doc/>
- **Estrella Mountain Regional Park**  
14805 W. Vineyard Avenue  
Goodyear, AZ 85338  
(623) 932-3811  
<http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/estrella/>
- **Lake Pleasant Regional Park**  
41835 N. Castle Hot Springs Rd.  
Morristown, AZ 85342  
(928) 501-1710  
[http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/lake\\_pleasant/](http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/lake_pleasant/)
- **McDowell Mountain Regional Park**  
16300 McDowell Mountain Park Dr.  
MMRP, AZ 85255  
(480) 471-0173  
<http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/mcdowell/>
- **San Tan Mountain Regional Park**  
6533 W. Phillips Rd.  
Queen Creek, AZ 85242  
(480) 655-5554  
<http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/santan/>
- **Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area**  
44000 N. Spur Cross Rd.  
Cave Creek, AZ 85331  
(480) 488-6601  
[http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/spur\\_cross/](http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/spur_cross/)

- **Usery Mountain Regional Park**  
3939 N. Usery Pass Rd.  
Mesa, AZ 85207  
(480) 984-0032  
<http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/usery/>
- **White Tank Mountain Regional Park**  
20304 W. White Tank Mountain Rd.  
Waddell, AZ 85355  
(623) 935-2505  
[http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/white\\_tank/](http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/white_tank/)

**Vision:** Our vision is to connect people with nature through regional parks, trails and programs, inspire an appreciation for the Sonoran desert beauty and natural open spaces, and create life-long positive memories.

**Mission:** Our mission, through responsible stewardship, is to provide the quality parks, trails, programs, services and experiences that energize visitors and create life-long users and advocates.

## PARK PROGRAMS

Experienced Interpretive Rangers take visitors on guided hikes to explore the ruins of Native American Hohokam, interpret the art chipped onto rocks known as petroglyphs and learn about the native wildlife. Maricopa County Parks offer visitors a variety of guided hikes at no additional cost. Whether you're interested in kayaking, mountain biking, adventure hikes or taking your children on a Toddler Cruise, Parks offers programming opportunities for everyone. For a complete listing of events at each park, visit the website at [www.maricopa.gov/parks](http://www.maricopa.gov/parks) and click on the "Events" link.

## SAFETY TIPS

Here are some helpful tips to ensure you have a safe and enjoyable experience at the park:

- Always hike or ride with a buddy or group
- Stay on designated trails
- Keep your dog on a leash at all times
- Be mindful and respectful of others – use proper trail etiquette
- Dress in comfortable hiking/riding attire
- Carry plenty of water with you and drink it regularly – you can still get dehydrated in the cooler weather
- Get a map to help guide you along the way
- and know where you are going
- Tell someone where you are going and when you plan to be back
- Understand and follow the park rules before setting out on a hike or ride
- Check weather reports prior to heading out
- Carry a first aid kit with you



## Holiday Sale

Join us at the parks for our annual Holiday Sale. This year, for every \$25 you spend, you get \$5 off your purchase. So if you spend \$75, you save \$15!



The sale begins at 8 a.m. on Friday, November 23rd and ends on Monday, December 24th at 4 p.m. Don't miss out on your chance to save money while purchasing your favorite park items!\*

*\*Excludes bargain basket items, annual passes, coupon books and tax.*

## ANIMALS

### NOVEMBER

**15 Thursday Bird Walk – 9 a.m.** How do you tell one brown bird from the next, and what are the first three items to look for as the little rascal flits off? Are you already a novice but interested in keeping a yearly, state or country bird list? Bird expert, Sandy Hornbaker, will talk about bird habitat, behavior, range, etc. as we go in search of the native birds in this area. Please bring binoculars, water, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Trail Staging Area.  
**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**16 Home School Program With the Arizona Science Center: Terrible Lizards – 9 a.m.** Join us to learn and explore the world of dinosaurs! Discover how they are named, how long ago they lived, how big they were, what they ate, and what they might have looked like. Recommended for ages 6-10, accompanied by an adult. Feel free to pack a lunch and enjoy a picnic in the park following the program. NOTE: Pre-registration is required through the Arizona Science Center. To register, or for more info, please call the Arizona Science Center at 602-716-2000 ext. 229, or email [campbellm@azscience.org](mailto:campbellm@azscience.org). Arizona Science Center members: \$15 for the first parent and child and \$5 for each additional child. Non-members: \$20 for the first parent and child and \$5 for each additional child. There is also a \$6 per vehicle entry fee. Location: Nature Center.  
**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Wildlife Safari – 9 a.m.** We all love to see wild animals, but where are they hiding this time of year?

Join us on this exciting 1.5-mile wildlife safari as we sneak to the secret places where the park's wildlife is often seen. Feel free to bring your camera and binoculars. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Trail Staging Area.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Snake Feeding – 3 p.m.** You can learn about the habits of some of the creatures of the desert by coming into the Nature Center during feeding time. (Caution – creatures are fed live animals so this could be upsetting to some people or small children).

**Park: White Tank Mountain Regional Park**

**17 Horse Talk With the Doc – 8:30 a.m.** If you love to ride, like winning free things, or just can't get enough of those unbelievable ungulates, then we have a treat for you. Stop by San Tan to meet Dr. Christensen from East Valley Equine as he shares his thoughts on staying safe and keeping a happy horse in the desert. Learn how to perfect equestrian care skills such as cactus removal, taking temperature, checking respiration, snake bites and so much more. Guests are welcomed to participate in a free raffle for a chance to win some equestrian goodies during the program.

**Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park**

**Basics of Bird Watching – 9 a.m.** Interested about getting into bird watching but don't know where to start? Want to know which bird is which and how to spot them? Join bird expert, Sandy Hornbaker, for this introduction to bird watching as she guides you on a quarter-mile stroll along our Desert Hawk Trail. Bring binoculars if you have them, otherwise, Sandy has some to loan. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Campground Nature Walk – 4 p.m.** Join park host, Sandy Hornbaker, for a late afternoon sojourn through our campground and nature trail on a quest to spot desert wildlife and plants. Wildlife sightings are not guaranteed, but bring binoculars, your afternoon tea, and a little patience. Be prepared to walk one to two miles. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Campsite 21 in the Buckhorn Campground.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Venomous Reptiles – 7 p.m.** Join reptile expert, Cale Morris, from the Phoenix Herpetological Society for this exciting presentation of live venomous reptiles! Cale will be bringing several different rattlesnakes and a gila monster with him. Bring your curiosities and questions to Usery Park and discover lots of cool things about these rockin' reptiles! Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**18 Find the Ranger – 9 a.m.** Join reptile expert, Cale Morris, from the Phoenix Herpetological Society for this exciting presentation of live venomous reptiles! Cale will be bringing several different rattlesnakes and a gila monster with him. Bring your curiosities and questions to Usery Park and discover lots of cool things about these rockin' reptiles! Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Close Encounters of the Reptilian Kind – 1 p.m.** Ever touched a snake? Join Ranger Amy for an up close and personal look at what makes these cold-blooded creatures so fascinating. Touch J.J. the gopher snake and meet 'Elvis' the uh...King...Snake. Bring the family, your camera, and your curiosity. This all-ages program will be indoors at our Nature Center.

**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

**Sonoran Desert 101 – 1:30 p.m.**

Join us for this introduction to some of the fascinating plants and animals of our Sonoran Desert as we enjoy a scenic stroll along the quarter-mile Desert Hawk Trail. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**20 Thursday Bird Walk – 10 a.m.** How do you tell one brown bird from the next, and what are the first three items to look for as the little rascal flits off? Are you already a novice but interested in keeping a yearly, state or country bird list? Bird expert, Sandy Hornbaker, will talk about bird habitat, behavior, range, etc. as we go in search of the native birds in this area. Please bring binoculars, water, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Trail Staging Area.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Just for Kids – Toddler Cruise – 10 a.m.** This 1-mile hike is designed for parents and grandparents with small children, ages 3 - 6 years old. Along with Miss Lynn, the kids will howl like coyotes, do the "bobcat crawl" and learn how to hydrate by counting gulps of water on their fingers. We will explore the desert along the scenic Merkle Trail. The hard-smooth surface of this trail will accommodate wheelchairs and strollers. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Area 6.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**



**Critters of the Night, Live! – 4 p.m.** Come on out and get in the Halloween spirit early with this special presentation on critters of the night. Adobe Mountain Wildlife volunteers will feature a number of live nighttime animals. An owl release over the lake at sunset may be staged (if an owl is ready for release). Program is on-going from 4 – 6 p.m. with the possible owl release near 6 p.m. (if available). Meet at the Visitor Center.

**Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park**

**21 Basics of Bird Watching – 9 a.m.** Interested about getting into bird watching but don't know where to start? Want to know which bird is which and how to spot them? Join bird expert, Sandy Hornbaker, for this introduction to bird watching as she guides you on a quarter-mile stroll along our Desert Hawk Trail. Bring binoculars if you have them, otherwise, Sandy has some to loan. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**22 Find the Ranger – 9 a.m.** This open-house style program features our ranger hiking along the Wind Cave Trail and stopping to talk to park visitors. Our ranger will be available to answer questions about the park, identify desert plants, or even explain which animals call Usery Park "home". Carry ample water. 9 a.m. - noon.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**



**23 Find the Ranger – 9 a.m.** This open-house style program features our ranger hiking along the Wind Cave Trail and stopping to talk to park visitors. Our ranger will be available to answer questions about the park, identify desert plants, or even explain which animals call Usery Park “home”. Carry ample water.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Backyard Birding – 9 a.m.** Do you drink coffee on your back porch Saturday mornings wondering about the names of the little birds flittering about? Bring your coffee to Usery Park and explore the endless possibilities of backyard birding with bird expert, Sandy Hornbaker. Learn how to attract different birds to your own backyard and what you must provide to your feathered friends. Ask Sandy what your responsibilities are as a backyard birdwatcher and what you can expect. Please bring binoculars and water. Location: Campsite 21 in the Buckhorn Campground.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Backyard Birding – ADA Accessible – 11 a.m.** Join lifelong birder and self-proclaimed bird-nerd, Ranger Amy for a basic introduction to desert birds and what to look for as we let the birds come to us. You’ll see birds up close and personal as they come to feeders right out back of the Nature Center. Be sure to bring your camera! This non-hiking program takes place behind our Nature Center.

**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

**24 Birdwalk - Nursery Tank Pond – 8 a.m.** Desert Birdwalk to Nursery Tank Pond. Bring your binocs and come on out. No previous birding experience is required, only an interest in birds! We’ll look for winter sparrows, Phainopeplas (often called ‘black cardinals’) and signs of our resident owls on this level, easy walk. Meet at the Nursery Tank Trailhead.

**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

**Saturday Bird Walk – 9 a.m.** How do you tell one brown bird from the next, and what are the first three items to look for as the little rascal flits off? Are you already a novice but interested in keeping a yearly, state or country bird list? Bird expert, Sandy Hornbaker, will talk about bird habitat, behavior, range, etc. as we go in search of the native birds in this area. Please bring binoculars and water. Location: Trail Staging Area.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Reptile Feeding - 11 a.m.** Have you ever seen a snake eat? Bring your questions for Ranger Amy to our toasty Visitor Center to watch our exhibit animals being fed. Meet our baby tortoises, desert blonde tarantula and giant desert hairy scorpion. Feeding takes place at the Visitor Center.

**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

**Venomous Creatures – 11 a.m.** Come to the White Tank Park Nature Center and see what lives in the deserts, your yard, your garage and sometimes in your house. Learn about the habits, myths and dangers of some of these residents. Charge is \$6.00. This will get you a pass to get into the Park after the program.

**Park: White Tank Mountain Regional Park**

**Reptiles of Arizona, Live! At the Visitor Center - 2 p.m.** A large number of reptiles make their home in Arizona. Come see some of these live reptiles and learn all sorts of interesting things about these natives of the desert. Program is on going from 2 p.m. until 4 p.m. Knowledgeable volunteers will be on hand to answer questions and share their knowledge.

**Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park**

**Campground Nature Walk – 4 p.m.** Join park host, Sandy Hornbaker, for a late afternoon sojourn through our campground and nature trail on a quest to spot desert wildlife and plants. Wildlife sightings are not guaranteed, but bring binoculars, your afternoon tea, and a little patience. Be prepared to walk one to two miles. Please bring water. Location: Campsite 21 in the Buckhorn Campground.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**



**All About Bald Eagles – 6 p.m.** Where do bald eagles live around here? Why are they the national symbol of America? How do they survive and thrive in the wild? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about bald eagles, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the “Brown-Bag It” series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some amazing facts about these beautiful birds. Watch us feed our snakes after the program at 7pm. Then join our “Animal Flashlight Walk” at 7:30pm at no extra cost! Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Animal Flashlight Walk – 7:30 p.m.** We are the nocturnal animals of the desert and we like to hide. Help Ranger B find us if you can! If you would like to learn about us and enjoy a night walk in the desert, then join Ranger B as he takes you on this exciting 1-mile/1-hour walk along the Merkle Trail. The Merkle Trail offers universal access and the hard-smooth surface of this trail will accommodate wheelchairs and strollers. Please bring water, a flashlight, and closed-toe shoes. No pets, please. Location: Area 6. Join our “All About Bald Eagles” program inside our Nature Center at 6pm, and our snake feeding at 7pm at no extra cost!

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**25 Find the Ranger – 9 a.m.** This open-house style program features our ranger hiking along the Wind Cave Trail and stopping to talk to park visitors. Our ranger will be available to answer questions about the park, identify desert plants, or even explain which animals call Usery Park “home”. Carry ample water. 9am-11am.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**New To Arizona – 1:30 p.m.** Are you new to Arizona? Are you curious about cactus and scared of snakes? If so, join us for an introductory experience to the Sonoran Desert. After a question-and-answer session, we will take an enjoyable quarter-mile walk on our scenic Desert Hawk Trail. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**28 Backyard Birding – 9 a.m.** Do you drink coffee on your back porch Saturday mornings wondering about the names of the little birds flittering about? Bring your coffee to Usery Park and explore the endless possibilities of backyard birding with bird expert, Sandy Hornbaker. Learn how to attract different birds to your own backyard and what you must provide to your feathered friends. Ask Sandy what your responsibilities are as a backyard birdwatcher and what you can expect. Please bring binoculars and water. Location: Campsite 21 in the Buckhorn Campground.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**29 Thursday Bird Walk – 9 a.m.** How do you tell one brown bird from the next, and what are the first three items to look for as the little rascal flits off? Are you already a novice but interested in keeping a yearly, state or country bird list? Bird expert, Sandy Hornbaker, will talk about bird habitat, behavior, range, etc. as we go in search of the native birds in this area. Please bring binoculars and water. Location: Trail Staging Area.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Intro to Animal Tracking 11 a.m.** Ever wondered what animal left their mark on the trail before you? Even when we don't see actual animals, we can determine which animals are in the Park through signs such as tracks and scat. On this short 0.6 mile round trip walk to the Nursery Tank pond, we'll use the clues they left behind to find out which animals visited the night before. Meet at the Nursery Tank Trailhead.

**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

**Welcome Back Snowbirds Full Moon Hike 6:30 p.m.** You don't have to be a snowbird to join us on this hike, but if you are a part-time Arizona resident, this is a perfect time to experience a desert night hike. Ranger Amy says ‘you haven't truly seen the desert until you've been on a night hike’. Bring a flashlight (it will not be a completely full moon), plenty of water and sturdy shoes. Hiking time is 2 hours, and 3 miles on the Pemberton Trail. No pets please. Meet at the Trailhead Staging Area.

**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

**30 Rattlesnakes of America Talk at the Visitor Center 11 a.m.** Join the Ranger at the visitor center for a fun talk on rattlesnakes of America. Learn all sorts of interesting things about these creepy critters across our great nation. Afterward, you have the option to stay and watch a reptile feeding.

**Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park**



**Basics of Bird Watching – 10 a.m.** Interested about getting into bird watching but don't know where to start? Want to know which bird is which and how to spot them? Join bird expert, Sandy Hornbaker, for this introduction to bird watching as she guides you on a quarter-mile stroll along our Desert Hawk Trail. Bring binoculars if you have them, otherwise, Sandy has some to loan. Please bring water. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Just for Kids – Little Desert Explorers – 10 a.m.**

This 1-mile hike is designed for parents and grandparents with small children, ages 3 – 6 years. Using their senses, kids will discover lots of cool things about the plants and animals that call our desert "home." We will explore the desert along the scenic Merkle Trail. The hard-smooth surface of this trail will accommodate wheelchairs and strollers. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Area 6.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**All About Coral Snakes – 12 p.m.** Are coral snakes really the most venomous snakes in Arizona? Where do they live around here? How do they survive and thrive in our desert? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about coral snakes, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some amazing facts about these colorful creatures. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Snake Feeding – 3 p.m.** You can learn about the habits of some of the creatures of the desert by coming into the Nature Center during feeding time. (Caution – creatures are fed live animals so this could be upsetting to some people or small children).

**Park: White Tank Mountain Regional Park**

**Bug Bonanza – 6 p.m.** Join us on a bug adventure in the desert! First we will start off with a presentation on different types of bugs that live in the desert and then we will get up close and personal with some special friends brought to us by bug experts from ASU. Next, we will try our luck finding creepy crawlers around the trails. This is a hit with the kids and you will be surprised how much you will enjoy it too! Bring flashlights, nets if you have them and go easy on the bug spray!! Bug guides will be on hand. Meet at the Nature Center.

**Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park**



## DECEMBER

**01 Saturday Bird Walk – 9 a.m.** How do you tell one brown bird from the next, and what are the first three items to look for as the little rascal flits off? Are you already a novice but interested in keeping a yearly, state or country bird list? Bird expert, Sandy Hornbaker, will talk about bird habitat, behavior, range, etc. as we go in search of the native birds in this area. Please bring binoculars, water, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Feeding Frenzy – 2 p.m.** It's time to feed our critters! Come out and see how these fascinating creatures munch on lunch! Meet in the Nature Center for this compelling consumption of calories!

**Park: Cave Creek Regional Park**

**Campground Nature Walk – 4 p.m.** Join park host, Sandy Hornbaker, for a late afternoon sojourn through our campground and nature trail on a quest to spot desert wildlife and plants. Wildlife sightings are not guaranteed, but bring binoculars, your afternoon tea, and a little patience. Be prepared to walk one to two miles. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Campsite 21 in the Buckhorn Campground.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**02 Find the Ranger – 9 a.m.** This open-house style program features our ranger hiking along the Wind Cave Trail and stopping to talk to park visitors. Our ranger will be available to answer questions about the park, identify desert plants, or even explain which animals call Usery Park "home". Carry ample water.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**





**Wildlife Tracking – 10 a.m.** Have you ever been curious to know who made those "tracks" in the dirt? Or have you ever wondered who pooped there? Come join us as we investigate the world of tracks and scat. We will begin our adventure inside the Nature Center learning about the different animals that live in the Sonoran Desert and the clues they leave behind. Then we will finish off with hike to apply our new found knowledge of looking for and understanding these clues. As a fun activity we will be making plaster cast tracks of some of your favorite desert critters to take home. Please bring water, wear sturdy shoes and dress appropriately for the weather. No dogs please. Meet at the Nature Center.

**Park: Cave Creek Regional Park**

**Kid's Adventure Hike – 1:30 p.m.** Kids, would you like to go on an outdoor adventure? Then this fun hike is for you! Along the way we do nature activities and discover cool things about wild animals. Each participant will receive their own free adventure journal! This program involves a 1-mile hike and is designed for kids ages 7-10. Kids must be accompanied by an adult. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Area 6.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Rudolph Stories and S'mores at the Visitor Center Amphitheater – 7 p.m.** Join us in the Lake Pleasant Visitor Center amphitheater for the reading of the original 1939 version of "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer," and the 1954 version of "Rudolph Shines Again." We may even play a few Reindeer games! If weather permits we will have a fire and S'mores in the amphitheater too! For bad weather, we will move inside the visitor center. Bring the kids and enjoy Rudolph, as we watch the sunset over the lake and have some fun.

**Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park**

**07 Just for Kids – Toddler Cruise – 10 a.m.** This 1-mile hike is designed for parents and grandparents with small children, ages 3 - 6 years old. Along with Miss Lynn, the kids will howl like coyotes, do the "bobcat crawl" and learn how to hydrate by counting gulps of water on their fingers. We will explore the desert along the scenic Merkle Trail. The hard-smooth surface of this trail will accommodate wheelchairs and strollers. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Area 6.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

### **Smart Phone Nature Photography – 11 a.m.**

Most of the photos that get posted to McDowell Mountain Park's Facebook page were taken on Ranger Amy's smartphone. It's amazing what you can capture with the camera you are already carrying around in your pocket. Learn how to make the most of your megapixels with just a few lessons in composition and style. And what better setting to learn photographic technique than in a beautiful natural park setting! Wear comfortable walking shoes, dress appropriately, and bring a smartphone with photo-taking abilities and the application(s) of your choice for this hands-on workshop. Meet at the North Trail.

**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

**Rattlers – 6 p.m.** Come out and meet Bryan Hughes of "Phoenix Rattlesnake Solutions" and see some of his amazing photography of Rattlers in the field.

**Park: Cave Creek Regional Park**

**08 Venomous Creatures – 2 p.m.** Join us in the Nature Center for a presentations about the venomous creatures you may find around Phoenix! Learn facts about these wonderful and misunderstood animals and the important roles each plays in the desert ecosystem. As Marie Curie, French Physicist and two – time Nobel Prize recipient said "Nothing in life is to be feared. It is only to be understood."

**Park: Cave Creek Regional Park**

**09 Find the Ranger – 9 a.m.** This open-house style program features our ranger hiking along the Wind Cave Trail and stopping to talk to park visitors. Our ranger will be available to answer questions about the park, identify desert plants, or even explain which animals call Usery Park "home". Carry ample water. 9 am-11 am.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Mammals of the Desert – 11 a.m.** Come to the White Tank Nature Center for a talk about mammals that inhabit our desert. This is not a hiking event but you are welcome to hike any one of our many trails after the talk.

**Park: White Tank Mountain Regional Park**

**Amazing Animals of Our Desert – 1:30 p.m.** What are the wild animals that live in our desert? How do they survive and thrive here? What should you do if you encounter one? Discover amazing things about our desert animals when you join our Interpretive Ranger for this one-mile walk along the scenic Merkle Trail. The hard-smooth surface of this trail will accommodate wheelchairs and strollers. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Area 6.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**



**New To Arizona – 1:30 p.m.** Are you new to Arizona? Are you curious about cactus and scared of snakes? If so, join us for an introductory experience to the Sonoran Desert. After a question-and-answer session, we will take an enjoyable quarter-mile walk on our scenic Desert Hawk Trail. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**13 All About Mammals – 12 p.m.** What makes mammals different from other animals? How do they survive and thrive in the wild? How dangerous are they? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about mammals, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some amazing facts about our furry friends. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**14 Reptiles of the Lake Pleasant Area Talk @ Visitor Center – 11 a.m.** Come enjoy the visitor center while you learn interesting things about the native reptiles around Lake Pleasant. Most of the cold blooded animals will be sleeping in shelter for the winter and most likely not be seen until the spring. For those willing to watch, at the end of the talk, the Ranger will supply food to a rattlesnake and a Gila monster! Come learn about these native reptiles.

**Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park**

**Survival Basics – 4 p.m.** Join us in the Nature Center for a presentation about the venomous creatures you may find around Phoenix! Learn the facts about these wonderful and misunderstood animals and the important roles each plays in the desert ecosystem. As Marie Curie, French Physicist and two – time Nobel Prize recipient said "Nothing in life is to be feared. It is only to be understood."

**Park: Cave Creek Regional Park**

**15 Find The Ranger – 9 a.m.** This open-house style program features our ranger hiking along the Wind Cave Trail and stopping to talk to park visitors. Our ranger will be available to answer questions about the park, identify desert plants, or even explain which animals call Usery Park "home". Carry ample water. 9 am – 11 am.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**New To Arizona – 10 a.m.** Are you new to Arizona? Are you curious about cactus and scared of snakes? If so, join us for an introductory experience to the Sonoran Desert. After a question-and-answer session, we will take an enjoyable quarter-mile walk on our scenic Desert Hawk Trail. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Bald Eagles of Lake Pleasant Talk at the Visitor Center – 1 p.m.** Lake Pleasant is home to a nesting pair of bald eagles and has several other bald eagles flying about. Come learn about the bald eagles of Lake Pleasant and how they are managed.

**Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park**

**Day Birds and Raptors, Live! At the Visitor Center - 2 p.m.** Visit some live birds of prey and you might get up close to a real bald eagle. A variety of live birds will be on display from Adobe Mountain Wildlife Center. Their volunteers will provide all sorts of great information about these feathered friends.

**Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park**

**Find The Ranger – 9 a.m.** This open-house style program features our ranger hiking along the Wind Cave Trail and stopping to talk to park visitors. Our ranger will be available to answer questions about the park, identify desert plants, or even explain which animals call Usery Park "home". Carry ample water. 9 am - Noon.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Mistletoe In The Desert? – 10 a.m.** Want to find native mistletoe in the desert? Discover the close relationship shared between this unique plant and a special little bird. This one-mile stroll on the Merkle Trail will not only teach you about the Sonoran Desert, but will also help get you in the holiday spirit! Please bring water. Location: Area 6.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**



## 19 Basics of Bird Watching – 10 a.m.

Interested about getting into bird watching but don't know where to start? Want to know which bird is which and how to spot them? Join bird expert, Sandy Hornbaker, for this introduction to bird watching as she guides you on a quarter-mile stroll along our Desert Hawk Trail. Bring binoculars if you have them, otherwise, Sandy has some to loan. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

## 21 Just For Kids – Little Desert Explorers – 10 a.m.

This 1-mile hike is designed for parents and grandparents with small children, ages 3 – 6 years. Using their senses, kids will discover lots of cool things about the plants and animals that call our desert "home." We will explore the desert along the scenic Merkle Trail. The hard-smooth surface of this trail will accommodate wheelchairs and strollers. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Area 6.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**All About Rattlesnakes – 6 p.m.** How dangerous are rattlesnakes? What should you do if you encounter one? How do they survive and thrive in our desert? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about rattlesnakes, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some amazing facts about these misunderstood reptiles. Location: Nature Center. Watch us feed our snakes after the program at 7pm. Then join our "Animal Flashlight Walk" at 7:30pm at no extra cost! Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Rattlesnakes of America Talk at Visitor Center - 1 p.m.** Join the Ranger at the visitor center for a fun talk on rattlesnakes of America. Learn all sorts of interesting things about these creepy critters across

our great nation. Afterward, you have the option to stay and watch a reptile feeding.

**Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park**

**Animal Flashlight Walk – 7:30 p.m.** We are the nocturnal animals of the desert and we like to hide. Help Ranger B find us if you can! If you would like to learn about us and enjoy a night walk in the desert, then join Ranger B as he takes you on this exciting 1-mile/1-hour walk along the Merkle Trail. The Merkle Trail offers universal access and the hard-smooth surface of this trail will accommodate wheelchairs and strollers. Please bring water, a flashlight, and closed-toe shoes. No pets, please. Location: Area 6. Join our "All About Rattlesnakes" program inside our Nature Center at 6pm, and our snake feeding at 7pm at no extra cost!

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

## 22 Find The Ranger – 9 a.m.

This open-house style program features our ranger hiking along the Wind Cave Trail and stopping to talk to park visitors. Our ranger will be available to answer questions about the park, identify desert plants, or even explain which animals call Usery Park "home". Carry ample water. 9 am - 11 am.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Sonoran Desert 101 – 10 a.m.** Join us for this introduction to some of the fascinating plants and animals of our Sonoran Desert as we enjoy a scenic stroll along the one-mile Merkle Trail. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Area 6.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Venomous Creatures Class – 11 a.m.** Come to the White Tank Nature Center for a talk about cold blooded creatures that inhabit our desert. This is not a hiking event but you are welcome to hike any one of our many trails after the talk. On display will be some venomous creatures and a few other creepy crawlies of the desert.

**Park: White Tank Mountain Regional Park**

**Saturday Bird Walk – 10 a.m.** How do you tell one brown bird from the next, and what are the first three items to look for as the little rascal flits off? Are you already a novice but interested in keeping a yearly, state or country bird list? Bird expert, Sandy Hornbaker, will talk about bird habitat, behavior, range, etc. as we go in search of the native birds in this area. Please bring binoculars, water, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**



**23 Find The Ranger – 1:30 p.m.** This open-house style program features our ranger hiking along the Wind Cave Trail and stopping to talk to park visitors. Our ranger will be available to answer questions about the park, identify desert plants, or even explain which animals call Usery Park “home”. Carry ample water.  
**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**27 Thursday Bird Walk – 10 a.m.** How do you tell one brown bird from the next, and what are the first three items to look for as the little rascal flits off? Are you already a novice but interested in keeping a yearly, state or country bird list? Bird expert, Sandy Hornbaker, will talk about bird habitat, behavior, range, etc. as we go in search of the native birds in this area. Please bring binoculars, water, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Trail Staging Area.  
**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Find The Ranger – 9 a.m.** This open-house style program features our ranger hiking along the Wind Cave Trail and stopping to talk to park visitors. Our ranger will be available to answer questions about the park, identify desert plants, or even explain which animals call Usery Park “home”. Carry ample water. 9 am – 11 am.  
**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Amazing Animals of Our Desert – 10 a.m.** What are the wild animals that live in our desert? How do they survive and thrive here? What should you do if you encounter one? Discover amazing things about our desert animals when you join our Interpretive Ranger for this one-mile walk along the scenic Merkle Trail. The hard-smooth surface of this trail will accommodate wheelchairs and strollers. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Area 6.  
**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**28 Backyard Birding – 10 a.m.** Do you drink coffee on your back porch Saturday mornings wondering about the names of

the little birds flittering about? Bring your coffee to Usery Park and explore the endless possibilities of backyard birding with bird expert, Sandy Hornbaker. Learn how to attract different birds to your own backyard and what you must provide to your feathered friends. Ask Sandy what your responsibilities are as a backyard birdwatcher and what you can expect. Please bring binoculars and water. Location: Campsite 21 in the Buckhorn Campground.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Just For Kids – Toddler Cruise – 10 a.m.** This 1-mile hike is designed for parents and grandparents with small children, ages 3 - 6 years old. Along with Miss Lynn, the kids will howl like coyotes, do the “bobcat crawl” and learn how to hydrate by counting gulps of water on their fingers. We will explore the desert along the scenic Merkle Trail. The hard-smooth surface of this trail will accommodate wheelchairs and strollers. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Area 6.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Cat Cave Hike – 1:30 p.m.** Kids, would you like to take a fun hike to see a cave where a mountain lion used to live? Not only will you get to hike in the desert but you will also discover amazing things about mountain lions! This 2-mile hike is on fairly-level ground. Not suitable for strollers. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Note: We won’t actually climb up to the cave but will view it from the trail. Location: Trail Staging Area.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Holiday Full Moon Hike – 6:30 p.m.** Got relatives in town? There is no better way to show off all the Sonoran Desert has to offer than by bringing them on a ranger-led crisp December full moon night hike. Pull on a jacket and hat and experience the desert in a new way at McDowell Mountain Regional Park. Flashlights are not necessary, but permitted. Bring plenty of water and sturdy shoes. Hiking time is 2 1/2 hours, and 3 miles. No pets please. Hikes begin at the Trailhead Staging area. Moonlit hike programs are free with \$6/vehicle entry to the Park.

**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

**29 Find The Ranger – 9 a.m.** This open-house style program features our ranger hiking along the Wind Cave Trail and stopping to talk to park visitors. Our ranger will be available to answer questions about the park, identify desert plants, or even explain which animals call Usery Park “home”. Carry ample water. 9 am – 11 am.  
**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**





**Basics of Bird Watching – 10 a.m.** Interested about getting into bird watching but don't know where to start? Want to know which bird is which and how to spot them? Join bird expert, Sandy Hornbaker, for this introduction to bird watching as she guides you on a quarter-mile stroll along our Desert Hawk Trail. Bring binoculars if you have them, otherwise, Sandy has some to loan. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Wildlife Safari – 10 a.m.** We all love to see wild animals, but where are they hiding this time of year? Join us on this exciting 1.5-mile wildlife safari as we sneak to the secret places where the park's wildlife is often seen. Feel free to bring your camera and binoculars. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Trail Staging Area.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Live Reptile and Animal Feeding – 11 a.m.** Have you ever seen a snake eat? Bring your questions for Ranger Amy to our toasty Visitor Center to watch our exhibit animals being fed. Meet our baby tortoises, NEW baby desert blonde tarantula and giant desert hairy scorpion. Feeding takes place at the Visitor Center.

**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

**New To Arizona - 1:30 p.m.** Are you new to Arizona? Are you curious about cactus and scared of snakes? If so, join us for an introductory experience to the Sonoran Desert. After a question-and-answer session, we will take an enjoyable quarter-mile walk on our scenic Desert Hawk Trail. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Campground Nature Walk – 4 p.m.** Join park host, Sandy Hornbaker, for a late afternoon sojourn through our campground and nature trail on a quest to spot desert wildlife and plants. Wildlife sightings are not guaranteed, but bring

binoculars, your afternoon tea, and a little patience. Be prepared to walk one to two miles. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Campsite 21 in the Buckhorn Campground.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

## AQUATICS

### DECEMBER

**08 Pleasant Paddlers Program – Agua Fria Eagle Watch, Meet at the North 4 – lane launch area – 9 a.m.** If you have a kayak or canoe, join us for a long paddle back to view the Bald Eagles before they start their nesting cycle. This area will be closed on December 15th, so this will be a last look at the eagles until this area opens up again in the summer. Bring lots of water and snacks, since this paddle will be around 15 miles, and will take most of the day. Life vest are mandatory.

**Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park**

**21 Holiday Light Parade Paddle at Scorpion Bay Marina – 6 p.m.** Dress up your kayak or canoe and come paddle in this holiday light parade around Scorpion Bay Marina. We will also see lots of boats decorated in the marina docks as well. Come enjoy this short 2 hour journey. Look for the "Holiday Light Parade Paddle" signs that lead to the first yellow gate. Don't be late, the gate is only manned between 5PM and 6PM (We set off at 6:30PM). Life vest are mandatory.

**Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park**

## ARCHAEOLOGY & HISTORY

### NOVEMBER

**15 Black Rock Archeology Hike – 10 a.m.** This is a 1/2 mile hike on a flat trail to one of the largest and most concentrated collection of Hohokam and Yavapai petroglyphs in the Valley. The hike will discuss history and lifestyles of the early native people of the Valley and try to decipher the meaning of some of the ancient rock art symbols along the trail. No dogs please. There is a lot of science in this hike so it may not be of interest to young children.

**Park: White Tank Mountain Regional Park**

**18 Clay Mine Hike – 10 a.m.** Join us for an adventure as we explore our Clay Mine! This will be an easy 2 mile hike (round trip). Once inside, we'll discuss the history of this mine and learn how its contents were used to cure all ailments. We will supply the hard hats. You bring water, a flashlight, & sturdy shoes. Meet at the Nature Center parking lot and follow the signs to the mine. This is an "open house" format, so you may come and go at your convenience during the designated time slot. The mine will be closed promptly at 1pm.

**Park: Cave Creek Regional Park**

**19 Take your Walk to the Desert - 9 a.m.** An innovative, fun, easy 1.5 hour walking experience for health, camaraderie, and the desert's serenity. This is designed for people who want to begin trekking in the desert at an easy pace. This activity will be led by docent Coni Grossman.

**Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area**

**23 Celestial Petroglyphs – 10 a.m.** – This is a reservation required hike to one of the more restricted areas in the Park to view some very unusual petroglyphs. We will only take 30 people on this hike so call early. 623-935-2505. This hike is not recommended for young children or those with physical limitations. No dogs please. You will get the meeting place when you register for the hike.

**Park: White Tank Mountain Regional Park**

**25 Program Title: Hohokam Houses-the Ruins of Spur Cross - 9 a.m.** Join us for this 2.5-mile hike that will introduce you to the rich archaeological history of the area. See evidence of prehistoric Hohokam dwellings and learn about their culture as we trek up to one of their mesa-top compounds. **Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area**

**28 Clay Mine Hike – 5 p.m.** Join us for an adventure as we explore our Clay Mine at night! This will be an easy 2 mile hike (round trip). Once inside, we'll discuss the history of this mine and learn how its contents were used to cure all ailments. We will supply the hard hats. You bring water, a flashlight, & sturdy shoes. Meet at the Nature Center parking lot and follow the signs to the mine. This is an "open house" format, so you may come and go at your convenience during the designated time slot. The mine will be closed promptly at 8 p.m.

**Park: Cave Creek Regional Park**

## DECEMBER



**08 Dragonfly Trail Exploration Hike - 9 a.m.** Join park ranger Kevin Smith on this exploration of the newest trail in the Spur Cross trail system, the Dragonfly Trail. On this moderate 3.5 mile hike we will visit a prehistoric rock art site and also stroll along a beautiful stretch of riparian habitat on Cave Creek. Bring plenty of water. **Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area**

**09 Rock Art of Spur Cross - 9 a.m.** The petroglyphs found in Spur Cross were created hundreds of years ago by the Hohokam people. Come and walk in their footsteps as we visit a few of the more impressive sites in the conservation area during this moderate 2-hour walk. **Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area**

**13 Brown Bag Historic Pemberton Ranch Hike – 10 a.m.** Join Ranger Amy on an interpretive hike to historic Pemberton Ranch. Children should have some previous hiking experience, as hiking time is 2 hours, and 3 miles. Bring a bag lunch for a picnic out at the ranch site, and of course, plenty of water and sturdy shoes for the hike. No pets please. Hike begins at the Trailhead Staging Area. **Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

**Black Rock Archeology Walk – 10 a.m.** This is a 1/2 mile hike on a flat trail to one of the largest and most concentrated collection of Hohokam and Yavapai petroglyphs in the Valley. The hike will discuss history and lifestyles of the early native people of the Valley and try to decipher the meaning of some of the ancient rock art symbols along the trail. Area 4 at 10:00 am. No dogs please. There is a lot of science in this hike so it may not be of interest to young children.

**Park: White Tank Mountain Regional Park**

## 15 **Dixie Mine Petroglyph Hike – 9 a.m.**

This is a rare opportunity to hike to an area with ancient Hohokam petroglyphs. The Dixie Mine area has some fascinating history, and stunning hidden petroglyphs. This area is one of the best kept secrets in the Park. This 5 1/2 mile roundtrip hike has a few steep inclines, but the trail is well-maintained, and the reward is worth it. Bring more water than you think you'll need, and meet at the Golden Eagle trailhead in Fountain Hills. We will park just before the Guard Gate at the end of Golden Eagle Blvd, and walk into the park. Call the Park for more detailed directions to the Trailhead.

**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

**Elephant Mountain Fortress Hike - 9 a.m.** Join us for a 7 mile/5 hour roundtrip trek into the backcountry to one of the premier archaeological sites on the conservation area. Participants need to be in good condition and familiar with what hiking on primitive trails for this distance entails. Participants must bring at least one liter of water. We recommend you have a hat and dress in layers. No dogs on this hike please. (difficult)

**Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area**

**29 Hohokam Houses – the Ruins of Spur Cross - 9 a.m.** Join us for this 2.5 mile hike that will introduce you to the rich archaeological history of the area. See evidence of prehistoric Hohokam dwellings and learn about their culture as we trek up to one of their mesa-top compounds. Bring plenty of water. (moderate)

**Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area**

## ASTRONOMY

### Discount Coupon Books



The discount coupon books make perfect stocking stuffers while helping you save money! By purchasing the day-use entry coupon books, you receive a

discounted entry rate into the parks. There are three types of booklets available for purchase:

- 3 coupons for \$15 (a \$3 saving)
- 5 coupons for \$24 (a \$6 saving) – quantities limited
- 10 coupons for \$45 (a \$15 saving)

Booklets can be purchased by visiting a County park or by phone at (602) 506-2930.

## DECEMBER

## 08 **Stargazing For Everyone – 7:30 p.m.**

Don't settle for just wondering what's above your head on a starry night, come out and LEARN about it! Tony and Carole La Conte are returning for another Stargazing event! After a fun introduction to astronomy, their amazing volunteers will fix their huge telescopes upon far away galaxies and nebulae that you will see for yourself! Stargazing is a fun and amazing way to start your weekend! We have special equipment for wheelchair access viewing. Please call and identify any special needs prior to attending one of our public programs. Bring lawnchairs and blankets to keep warm. Meet at Trailhead Staging Area.

**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

## ENTERTAINMENT & SOCIAL SKILLS

## NOVEMBER

**15 Just for Kids – Storytime in the Desert – 11 a.m.** Kids (including parents and grandparents) will learn about our desert through a fun story, game, and a short nature walk. Feel free to bring a picnic lunch to enjoy after the program as we have three shaded playgrounds in our park. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

## 17 **Program Title: Desert Discovery Day at the Jewel of the Creek - 10 a.m.**

Join us from 10am-2pm as we discover the wonder and beauty of our Sonoran Desert home with a day of outdoor experiences and hands-on education at the Jewel of the Creek Preserve. The day will include a "scavenger hunt" of informational stations along the Harry Dalton Trail. There will be exhibitors, crafts, and even free hot dogs, snacks, and beverages. Participants include Arizona Archaeological Society, Arizona Audubon, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation, Southwest Wildlife, and Wild at Heart.

**Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area**

**23 Eco Tour – 8 a.m.** Who ate all of the plants in my front yard? And what is that tall spiky thing shooting out of the ground? If it's your first time to the desert, or you are curious about the creatures and plants that call this area home then join Ranger Adam as we explore the Sonoran Desert's unique sights, sounds and smell on the Littleleaf Trail. The hike will

be approximately 1.3-miles, round trip, at a relatively mild or slow pace. Please wear proper hiking attire and bring plenty of water.

**Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park**

**29 Just for Kids – Storytime in the Desert Kids** (including parents and grandparents) will learn about our desert through a fun story, game, and a short nature walk. Feel free to bring a picnic lunch to enjoy after the program as we have three shaded playgrounds in our park. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**30 Moonlight Hike – 9 a.m.** The conservation area is a different experience when seen softly illuminated by the silver moon. While we will attempt to minimize the use of flashlights, bring one in case you need it.

**Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area**

## DECEMBER

**01 Stories from the White Tanks – 11 a.m.** Hear interesting stories and anecdotes of the White Tank Mountain area delivered by master story teller, Dr. Joyce Story.

**Park: White Tank Mountain Regional Park**

**02 Rudolph Stories and S'mores at the Visitor Center Amphitheater 7 p.m.** Join us in the Lake Pleasant Visitor Center amphitheater for the reading of the original 1939 version of "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer," and the 1954 version of "Rudolph Shines Again." We may even play a few Reindeer games! If weather permits we will have a fire and smores in the amphitheater too! For bad weather, we will move inside the visitor center. Bring the kids and enjoy Rudolph, as we watch the sunset over the lake and have some fun.

**Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park**

**07 Smart Phone Photography Workshop – 11 a.m.** Most of the photos that get posted to McDowell Mountain Park's Facebook page were taken on Ranger Amy's smartphone. It's amazing what you can capture with the camera you are already carrying around in your pocket. Learn how to make the most of your megapixels with just a few lessons in composition and style. And what better setting to learn photographic technique than in a beautiful natural park setting! Wear comfortable walking shoes, dress appropriately, and bring a smartphone with photo-taking abilities and the application(s) of your choice for this hands-on workshop. Meet at the North Trail.

**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**



**12 Polliwoggin' Storytime – 10 a.m.** Storytime is geared towards our youngest nature enthusiasts (ages 2-6)! Join us for a themed program set around a children's book. Activities will follow and may include live animals, songs, crafts, a short hike and /or games. Please wear sturdy shoes and dress appropriately for the weather. Meet at the Nature Center.

**Park: Cave Creek Regional Park**

**13 Just for Kids – Storytime In The Desert – 11 a.m.** Kids (including parents and grandparents) will learn about our desert through a fun story, game, and a short nature walk. Feel free to bring a picnic lunch to enjoy after the program as we have three shaded playgrounds in our park. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**14 Home School Program – 9 a.m.** Electricity – create it, experience it, and explore it! Learn what causes static electricity and observe how it can affect us in our daily lives. Recommended for ages 6-10, accompanied by an adult. NOTE: Pre-registration is required through the Arizona Science Center. To register, please call the Arizona Science Center at 602-716-2000 ext. 229, or email [campbellm@azscience.org](mailto:campbellm@azscience.org). Arizona Science Center members: \$15 for the first parent and child and \$5 for each additional child. Non-members: \$20 for the first parent and child and \$5 for each additional child. There is also a \$6 per vehicle entry fee to enter Usery Mountain Regional Park. Location: Usery Park Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**21 Black Rock Short Loop Luminary Hike – 7 p.m.** The Black Rock Short Loop trail will be bedecked with luminaries from 7:00 pm till 9 pm. Come and stroll this ¼ mile flat loop then enjoy some time by the campfire. We will



have marshmallows and hot chocolate and tea to warm you up afterwards. No dogs please.

**Park: White Tank Mountain Regional Park**

**27 Adult Moonlight Hike – 7 p.m.** Walking into the Waterfall Canyon in the moonlight will give you a different perspective on the beauty of the Uplands Desert. We will discuss the unique changes in the desert after the sun sets. Bring a flashlight. No one under 16 years of age can come on this hike. Meet at Area 6 parking lot at 7:00 pm. No dogs please.

**Park: White Tank Mountain Regional Park**

**28 Family Moonlight Hike – 7 p.m.** The Waterfall Canyon in the moonlight will give you a different perspective on the beauty of the Uplands Desert. We will discuss the unique changes in the desert after the sun sets. Bring a flashlight. Meet at Area 6 parking lot before 7:00 pm. No dogs please.

**Park: White Tank Mountain Regional Park**

**29 Desert Scavenger Hunt – 1:30 p.m.** Join Ranger B on this exciting scavenger hunt as we solve riddles and find things in our desert (using our eyes only). Not only will we have a lot of fun but we will also learn amazing things about our desert plants and animals! Free posters will be given to the top five winners. The 1-mile Merkle Trail offers universal access and the hard-smooth surface of this trail will accommodate wheelchairs and strollers. Please bring water and hats. Location: Meet at Area 6.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**30 Painting on Animals on Rocks – 1 p.m.** Unleash your creativity and enjoy an afternoon of painting on rocks in our comfy Visitor Center. You may think that is just for kids...but wait until you see the art you can create with just a few tips and tricks. Ranger Amy will show you some surprisingly easy techniques that even children can use to create keepsakes out of river rocks, using the popular book series, "Painting Animals on Rocks" by artist Lin Wellford. Hot chocolate will be provided, free of charge. This program is suitable for ages 4 through adult. Painting mocks will be provided, or you can wear a shirt that can get permanent paint on it.

**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

## GEOLOGY



## NOVEMBER

**21 Exploring Desert Washes – 9 a.m.** Have you ever walked inside a desert wash? What makes them so special and unique? How do washes contribute to the health of the desert itself? Join us for a look at the fascinating world of desert washes as we explore their importance to the desert ecosystem. This walk is 1.5 mile in length. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Trail Staging Area.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**30 Name the "Stones"!** This is a hands on introduction to the identification of rocks. A general introduction of rocks types and importance of texture and composition in determining their origins will be presented. Specimens will be available to observe and handle and categorize in the closing review. \*\*\*Special Guest Speaker, Joe Ford. Joe is a native of Missouri. He holds several degrees in education and a Masters Degree in Natural Science from the University of Oklahoma. He has been an educator on the junior high, high school and college levels. After 42 years in the teaching field he retired to Sun City, Arizona. He is a board member in the Sonoran Audubon Society and a member of the Sun City Rockhounds, among many of his other interests.

**Park: Cave Creek Regional Park**

## DECEMBER

**20 Last Hike Before the End of the World – 10 a.m.** We have been hearing about the end of man's reign on this planet for years. How do we know this? The Mayan Calendar nuts of course! Where have you been? So to celebrate our demise, we will take one last hike before we all vaporize into nothingness, which, by the way, is supposed to happen at 3:11 am MST on 12.21.12. We will do a wash hike to talk about the

last 3.5 billion years or so. This is an off trail walk in some rough terrain and problematic for young children and those with physical limitations. Plan accordingly. Meet at Area 9 before 10:00 am. If you are not there at 10 we will leave without you. If we are all still here after 3:11 MST, feel free to read the rest of the schedule and to the Mayan believers we say, "told you so!"

**Park: White Tank Mountain Regional Park**

**21 Exploring Desert Washes – 10 a.m.** Have you ever walked inside a desert wash? What makes them so special and unique? How do washes contribute to the health of the desert itself? Join us for a look at the fascinating world of desert washes as we explore their importance to the desert ecosystem. This walk is 1.5 mile in length. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Trail Staging Area.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

## HEALTH & FITNESS

### NOVEMBER

**16 Friday Fitness Hike- Scenic Trail 8 a.m.** ALL Fridays through November (hike length varies). Come to one or all of the Fitness Hiking Series, every Friday. It's a great way to meet new people and get fit! Meet at the Trailhead Staging Area for this week's hike on the Scenic Trail. We build up to a longer hike at the end of each month.

**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

**Fitness Hike – 9 a.m.** Make room for Thanksgiving! This way better than a treadmill! See how fun exercise can be in Cave Creek Regional Park. Come to one or all of the Fitness Hikes. All levels of fitness are welcome. We will set a moderate, steady pace, based on the fitness level of participants. Beginners are welcome. We will bring you out on a different trail each week and total 2.5 to 3.5 miles each week. Meet at the Nature Center. Bring a hat, sturdy shoes, and plenty of water!

**Park: Cave Creek Regional Park**

**Healthy Hiking - 9 a.m.** Get your day started with a two-mile brisk, non-interpretive walk along the Metate Trail. Participants need not be tri-athletes, just ordinary folks who would like to add diversity to their existing walking program. Wear sturdy shoes and bring plenty of water.

**Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area**



**Walk On The Wild Side – Dog Hike – 9 a.m.**

Wake up and head to San Tan for a walk you and your dog are sure to enjoy. Socialize your dog, meet new dog people and learn some helpful tips on how to keep your four legged pal's tail wagging happily in the desert. Dogs must remain on leashes, be up to date on vaccines and play nice. This hike is a 1.3-mile loop on the Littleleaf and Goldmine trails.

**Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park**

**Sunset Flashlight Hike – Meets @ Visitor Center 5 p.m.** Put on your hiking shoes and join us for a scenic 4-mile hike above the shoreline of Lake Pleasant. Bring your flashlight and a water bottle. There will be bathrooms and water available along the trail.

**Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park**

**17 Progressive Fitness Hike #3 – 8 a.m.** Want to increase your fitness level and also enjoy the outdoors? Hit the trails with us for a fun way to get back in shape! During this hike series, each hike will increase in length and difficulty in order to help you prepare for the grand finale hike – the 7.5-mile loop trail around Pass Mountain! This is a great way to get in shape and to hike many different trails in Usery Park at the same time. This hike series will take place every Saturday at 8am through December 9. This third hike of the series will be approximately 4.5 miles. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Trail Staging Area. Note: Participation in the 4th or 5th hike in this series is required to do the final hike.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**18 Trail Master Series – Level 2 – 10 a.m.** Have you hiked all 20 miles of the beautiful trails at San Tan? Join the adventure and increase your skill level as we hike every trail in the park, while gradually increasing difficulty as we go along. This is the second hike in the series and will be 2.2-miles round trip. Please wear appropriate hiking attire and bring water.

**Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park**



**19 Take your Walk to the Desert - 9 a.m.** An innovative, fun, easy 1.5 hour walking experience for health, camaraderie, and the desert's serenity. This is designed for people who want to begin trekking in the desert at an easy pace. This activity will be led by docent Coni Grossman.  
**Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area**

**23 Friday Fitness Hike 8 a.m.** ALL Fridays through November (hike length varies). Come to one or all of the Fitness Hiking Series, every Friday. It's a great way to meet new people and get fit! Meet at the Wagner Trailhead for this week's hike. We build up to a longer hike at the end of each month.  
**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

**Progressive Fitness Hike #4 – 8 a.m.** Want to increase your fitness level and also enjoy the outdoors? Hit the trails with us for a fun way to get back in shape! During this hike series, each hike will increase in length and difficulty in order to help you prepare for the grand finale hike – the 7.5-mile loop trail around Pass Mountain! This is a great way to get in shape and to hike many different trails in Usery Park at the same time. This hike series will take place every Saturday at 8am through December 9. This fourth hike of the series will be approximately 5.5 miles. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Trail Staging Area. Note: Participation in the 4th or 5th hike in this series is required to do the final hike.  
**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Sunset Summit – Adults Only – 4:15 p.m.** Hike the rugged Goldmine trail to the top and watch the sunset from the best view in the park. Transitioning colors will fill the sky as day turns into night and a new shift of animals stir about. This hike is for adults only and rated moderate to difficult, with roughly 700 feet of elevation gain. Please bring a flashlight, water and proper hiking attire.  
**Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park**

**25 Trails on Trails – Dog Fitness Hike (Experienced Level) – 9 a.m.** Fit dogs are happier, healthier, and display fewer behavioral problems. Trails on Trails will provide the opportunity to meet other dog hikers, learn safe hiking practices and dog trail etiquette. The fun, 3-mile hike along the Blevins Trail is great for experienced hiker dogs. Please bring a short non-extendable leash, a small cleanup bag, and water for you and your dog. One dog per hiker, please. Note: A "Beginners Level" Dog Fitness Hike is also offered each month for those who feel they need the basics before advancing to this level. Location: Trail Staging Area.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**26 Take your Walk to the Desert - 9 a.m.** An innovative, fun, easy 1.5 hour walking experience for health, camaraderie, and the desert's serenity. This is designed for people who want to begin trekking in the desert at an easy pace. This activity will be led by docent Coni Grossman.  
**Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area**

**27 Full Moon Hike – 5 p.m.** Say adios to the sun and hello to the full moon because on this cool desert hike we will be simultaneously enjoying a beautiful sunset to the west and a gorgeous moonrise to the east. Once the sun is gone, the full moon will illuminate our path through 2.2 miles of a stunning Sonoran Desert night scene. Bring your cameras and water for a spectacular night hike you won't forget.

**Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park**

**28 All About Valley Fever – 12 p.m.** What exactly is "Valley Fever"? How do people and pets get it? How dangerous is it? Can it be prevented and how is it treated? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about valley fever, then this one-hour presentation is for you. Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some helpful facts about this desert disease. Location: Nature Center.  
**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Full Moon Hike – 7 p.m.** Join us for this 2-mile night hike under November's "Full Frosty Moon." The full moon is a great time to experience new sights and sounds of the desert! Bring your sense of adventure for this interpretive hike with our park ranger, Ranger B. Please bring a flashlight, water, and closed-toe shoes. No pets, please. Location: Trail Staging Area.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**





**29 Fitness Hike – 9 a.m.** This way better than a treadmill! See how fun exercise can be in Cave Creek Regional Park. Come to one or all of the Fitness Hikes. All levels of fitness are welcome. We will set a moderate, steady pace, based on the fitness level of participants. Beginners are welcome. We will bring you out on a different trail each week and total 2.5 to 3.5 miles each week. Meet at the Nature Center. Bring a hat, sturdy shoes, and plenty of water!

**Park: Cave Creek Regional Park**

**Adult Moonlight Walk – 7:30 p.m.** Walking up into Waterfall Canyon in the moonlight will give you a different perspective on the beauty of the Uplands Desert. We will discuss the unique changes in the desert after the sun sets. No one under 16 on this hike. No dogs please. Bring a flashlight.

**Park: White Tank Mountain Regional Park**

**30 Friday Fitness Hike- Dixie Mine (note directions to trailhead) 8 a.m.** ALL Fridays through November (hike length varies). Come to one or all of the Fitness Hiking Series, every Friday. It's a great way to meet new people and get fit! Meet at the Dixie Mine Trailhead for this week's hike. We build up to a longer hike at the end of each month. Meet at the Golden Eagle trailhead in Fountain Hills. We will park just before the Guard Gate at the end of Golden Eagle Blvd, and walk into the park. Please note, entry for this hike is \$2 per person (rather than the usual \$6 per car), since it is a walk-in.

**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

**Family Moonlight Walk – 7:30 p.m.** Walking up into Waterfall Canyon in the moonlight will give you a different perspective on the beauty of the Uplands Desert. We will discuss the unique changes in the desert after the sun sets. No dogs please. Bring a flashlight.

**Park: White Tank Mountain Regional Park**

## DECEMBER

**01 Dawn to Dusk Bike Race – 5 a.m.** This 10+ hour endurance ride will begin at the intersection of the Competitive Track and Four Peaks Staging Area, along the park road. The main park road will be closed for about 1/2 an hour at the beginning of this ride ("dawn"). Laps on the Pemberton Trail for teams and individual riders make this event a good choice for those who want to take their first step into endurance events. Get your team together or if you're up to it signup as a solo rider. ALL PARTICIPANTS MUST BE REGISTERED

**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

**Progressive Fitness Hike #5 – 8 a.m.** Want to increase your fitness level and also enjoy the outdoors? Hit the trails with us for a fun way to get back in shape! During this hike series, each hike will increase in length and difficulty in order to help you prepare for the grand finale hike – the 7.5-mile loop trail around Pass Mountain! This is a great way to get in shape and to hike many different trails in Usery Park at the same time. This hike series will take place every Saturday at 8am through December 8. This fifth hike of the series will be approximately 6.5 miles. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Trail Staging Area. Note: Participation in the 4th or 5th hike in this series is required to do the final hike.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**03 Take your Walk to the Desert - 9 a.m.** An innovative, fun, easy 1.5 hour walking experience for health, camaraderie, and the desert's serenity. This is designed for people who want to begin trekking in the desert at an easy pace. Wear sturdy shoes and plenty of water. This activity will be led by park docent Coni Grossman.

**Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area**

**06 Cardio Care Fitness Hike for 55+ - 9 a.m.** Treat your heart to a needed dose of healthy exercise! In the beauty of our scenic Sonoran Desert we will enjoy this medium-paced cardio workout. This fun hike will do a 3-mile loop around the Blevins Trail.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Fitness Hike – 9 a.m.** This is way better than a treadmill! See how fun exercise can be in Cave Creek Regional Park. Come to one or all of the Fitness Hikes. All levels of fitness are welcome. We will set a moderate, steady pace, based on the fitness level of participants. Beginners are welcome. We will bring you out on a different trail each week and total 2.5 to 3.5 miles each week. Meet at the Nature Center.



Bring a friend, a hat, sturdy shoes, and plenty of water!

**Park: Cave Creek Regional Park**

**07 Friday's Fitness Hike-Trailhead Staging Area – 8 a.m.** Come to one or all of the Fitness Hiking Series, every Friday. It's a great way to meet new people and get fit! Meet at the Trailhead Staging Area (Pemberton Trail) Trailhead for this week's hike. We build up to a longer hike at the end of each month. This week's hike will be 3-5 miles in length.

**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

**Healthy Hiking Date - 9 a.m.** Get your day started with a two mile brisk non-interpretive walk along the Metate Trail. Participants need not be tri-athletes, just ordinary folks who would like to add diversity to their existing walking program. Wear sturdy shoes and bring plenty of water. (moderate)

**Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area**

**08 McDowell Mountain Frenzy – 7 a.m.** The McDowell Mountain Frenzy is the third race in the Desert Runner Trail Series.

This is a multi-distance foot race held on the Competitive Track. Choose your distance from a 50K starting at 7:00 a.m. a 25K at 8, 10 mile at 8:15 or a 5K beginning at 8:30. You'll enjoy a cool morning running through the Sonoran Desert. ALL PARTICIPANTS MUST BE REGISTERED.

**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

**Progressive Fitness Hike #6 – a.m.** Today is the day you have been training for! This is the grand finale hike of our 6-week hike series – the culmination of five previous hikes that have prepared us for this 7.5 mile loop around Pass Mountain. Please bring ample water, snacks, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Trail Staging Area. Note: Participation in the 4th or 5th hike in this series was required to do this final hike.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**13 Fitness Hike – 9 a.m.** This is way better than a treadmill! See how fun exercise can be in Cave Creek Regional Park. Come to one or all of the Fitness Hikes. All levels of fitness are welcome. We will set a moderate, steady pace, based on the fitness level of participants. Beginners are welcome. We will bring you out on a different trail each week and total 2.5 to 3.5 miles each week. Meet at the Nature Center. Bring a friend, a hat, sturdy shoes, and plenty of water!

**Park: Cave Creek Regional Park**

**14 Friday's Fitness Hike – 8 a.m.** Come to one or all of the Fitness Hiking Series, every Friday. It's a great way to meet new

people and get fit! Meet at the Wagner Trailhead for this week's hike. We build up to a longer hike at the end of each month.

**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

**15 Tails On Trails – Dog Fitness Hike (Beginners Level) – 1:30 p.m.** Fit dogs are happier, healthier, and display fewer behavioral problems. Tails on Trails will provide the opportunity to meet other dog hikers, learn safe hiking practices and dog trail etiquette. The fun, 1-mile hike along the level Merkle Trail is great for beginner hiker dogs. Please bring a short non-extendable leash, a small cleanup bag, and water for you and your dog. One dog per hiker, please. After completing this hike, you and your dog will be ready for our "Experienced Level" Dog Fitness Hike! Location: Area 6.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**20 Fitness Hike – 9 a.m.** This is way better than a treadmill! See how fun exercise can be in Cave Creek Regional Park. Come to one or all of the Fitness Hikes. All levels of fitness are welcome. We will set a moderate, steady pace, based on the fitness level of participants. Beginners are welcome. We will bring you out on a different trail each week and total 2.5 to 3.5 miles each week. Meet at the Nature Center. Bring a friend, a hat, sturdy shoes, and plenty of water!

**Park: Cave Creek Regional Park**

**22 Tails on Trails – Dog Fitness Hike (Experienced Level) – 1:30 p.m.** Fit dogs are happier, healthier, and display fewer behavioral problems. Tails on Trails will provide the opportunity to meet other dog hikers, learn safe hiking practices and dog trail etiquette. The fun, 3-mile hike along the Blevins Trail is great for experienced hiker dogs. Please bring a short non-extendable leash, a small cleanup bag, and water for you and your dog. One dog per hiker, please. Note: A "Beginners Level" Dog Fitness Hike is also offered each month for those who feel they need the basics before advancing to this level. Location: Trail Staging Area.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Campground Nature Walk – 4 p.m.** Join park host, Sandy Hornbaker, for a late afternoon sojourn through our campground and nature trail on a quest to spot desert wildlife and plants. Wildlife sightings are not guaranteed, but bring binoculars, your afternoon tea, and a little patience. Be prepared to walk one to two miles. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Campsite 21 in the Buckhorn Campground.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**23 Find The Ranger – 9 a.m.** This open-house style program features our ranger hiking along the Wind Cave Trail and stopping to talk to park visitors. Our ranger will be available to answer questions about the park, identify desert plants, or even explain which animals call Usery Park “home”. Carry ample water. 9 am - 11 am.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**New To Arizona – 10 a.m.** Are you new to Arizona? Are you curious about cactus and scared of snakes? If so, join us for an introductory experience to the Sonoran Desert. After a question-and-answer session, we will take an enjoyable quarter-mile walk on our scenic Desert Hawk Trail. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**28 Full Moon Hike – 7 p.m.** Join us for this 2-mile night hike under December’s “Long Night Moon.” The full moon is a great time to experience new sights and sounds of the desert! Bring your sense of adventure for this interpretive hike with our park ranger, Ranger B. Please bring a flashlight, water, and closed-toe shoes. No pets, please. Location: Trail Staging Area.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**29 Last Hike of 2012 – 10 a.m.** We will walk the Black Rock Long Loop Trail (2 mile walk) for this last hike. We will talk a little about plants, animals, climate and history. This will be just a casual and informative stroll. Meet at Area 4. No dogs please.

**Park: White Tank Mountain Regional Park**

## OUTDOOR SKILLS

### NOVEMBER

**16 Desert Awareness @ Visitor Center 11 a.m.** If you are new to the valley or just starting to explore the desert, you may want to attend this talk about the many things you might want to know about this unforgiving environment. Talk will feature awareness strategy, equipment items, animals and plants which could harm you, and other issues.

**Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park**

**17 Making Robin Hoods – Archery 101 – 9 a.m.** Learn to shoot a recurve, compound, and cross bow. This 1.5 hour class is the first step in learning archery. Wear comfortable clothes, closed toe shoes and bring some



cold water. All equipment is provided. Call 602-372-7460 x 202, and leave name, phone number, and how many people wishing to attend. Ranger will call to let you know if there is room in the class (only 12 people per class). Follow the “Archery 101” signs from the main contact station to the group campground.

**Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park**

**Archery 101 – 10 a.m.** Maricopa County Parks and Recreation and Arizona Game and Fish are excited to get you behind the bow with a fun introduction to archery. Ages 8 and up are welcome to participate in the fun and safe sport of International Target Style Archery. This is a great way to get involved with this amazing sport and best of all; we will provide all the equipment. All you need to do is reserve a spot by calling 480.655.5554 or emailing Ranger Adam at [adammartell@mail.maricopa.gov](mailto:adammartell@mail.maricopa.gov), then show up and let the fun begin. Adults are welcome to participate too. ALL PARTICIPANTS MUST WEAR CLOSED-TOED SHOES.

**Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park**

**Archery 202 – 10 a.m.**

For those who completed our “Archery 101” class, this class will take you to the next level! Participants will learn about field target archery, discover how to improve their accuracy, and enjoy some friendly competition. Equipment will be provided.

Participants must be graduates of our “Archery 101” class. This class is open to ages 8 and up. Minors must be accompanied by an adult. Advanced registration is required. Please call the park at 480-984-0032 to register. Limited to 20 participants. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Meet at the Archery Range.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Let the Arrows Fly - Archery 101 - 11 a.m.** Learn to shoot a recurve, compound, and cross bow. This 1.5 hour class is the first step in learning archery. Wear comfortable clothes, closed toe shoes and bring some cold water. All equipment is provided. Call 602-372-7460 ext. 202, and leave name, phone number, and how many people wishing to attend. Ranger will

call to let you know if there is room in the class (only 12 people per class). Follow the "Archery 101" signs from the main contact station to the group campground.

**Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park**

**Survival Basics – 1 p.m.** The U.S. Coast Guard's motto is "Semper Paratus!" (Always Ready!). Are you ready? The wilderness doesn't tolerate the unprepared. Join Ranger Mark in the Nature Center for this, need to know - before you go, information.

**Park: Cave Creek Regional Park**

**Archery 202 – 1 p.m.** Take your archery skills to the next level by fine tuning your technique through a variety of fun games and exciting shooting exercises. Participants must have successfully completed a Maricopa County Parks and Rec Archery 101 or Intro to Archery class and present their Archer's card to the instructor before the start of the class. To reserve your spot, call 480.655.5554 or email Ranger Adam at [adammartell@mail.maricopa.gov](mailto:adammartell@mail.maricopa.gov), then show up and let the fun begin. This class is open to ages 8 and up. Minors must be accompanied by an adult. Please bring water hats and closed-toed shoes.

**Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park**

**Practice Your Aim – Open Archery 2 p.m.** If you already have your Archery 101 card, come join us and practice your archery skills during this open range time(ends at 4PM). Group camp area - all equipment provided or bring your own, must have Archery 101 card to participate.

**Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park**

**21 Desert Grocery Store-Thanksgiving Edition! – 10 a.m.** The Sonoran Desert is a virtual grocery store and pharmacy... if you know where to look. See (and sample) some of what people used to eat before grocery stores came to Phoenix, and find out which ones are still consumed. Guaranteed to make you think twice about how easy it was to make that Thanksgiving meal. Try a chocolate chip cookie made with mesquite flour, or a cracker with prickly pear jelly, along this easy, 2 mile stroll. Meet at the North Trail Trailhead.

**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

**Hiking the Superstitions – 12 p.m.** The Superstition Wilderness Area has some of the best hiking in the West! Find out where to go and what to see in the "Supes" during this one-hour presentation. Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some useful tips about hiking in this legendary wilderness area. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Utery Mountain Regional Park**



**24 Ride With The Ranger – 10 a.m.** Are you new to mountain biking? Are you looking for a group to go riding with? Or do you just like playing in the dirt? Either way we have the perfect opportunity for you. Join Ranger Adam as we hit the trails and explore the outdoors by bike on the Stargazer Trail (roughly 2.2-miles round trip). On the way we will talk about proper trail etiquette, bike equipment, types of bikes, riding techniques, safety and more. Please bring plenty of water, your bike, and helmet.

**Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park**

**29 Ride With The Ranger – 3 p.m.** Join the Ranger and Cave Creek Trailrides as we introduce you to the Sonoran Desert on horseback! This will be a 1 hour ride where we will introduce you to the desert environment as you have never seen it. \*\*\* Registration is required for this fee based program. \*\*\* Please call Cave Creek Trailrides at 623-742-6700 to sign up\*\*\*\*

**Park: Cave Creek Regional Park**

## DECEMBER

**01 Making Robin Hoods - Archery 101 – 9 a.m.** Learn to shoot a recurve, compound, and cross bow. This 1.5 hour class is the first step in learning archery. Wear comfortable clothes, closed toe shoes and bring some cold water. All equipment is provided. Call 602-372-7460 x 202, and leave name, phone number, and how many people wishing to attend. Ranger will call to let you know if there is room in the class (only 12 people per class). Follow the "Archery 101" signs from the main contact station to the group campground.

**Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park**

**Archery 101 – 9 a.m.** Interested in archery? Curious about how to shoot a bow? Come to Utery Park and find out! You will discover how fun archery really is! Participants will experience a fun and safe introduction to recreational and international-style target archery. Equipment will be provided. This class is open to

anyone ages 8 and up. Minors must be accompanied by an adult. Advanced registration is required. Please call the park at 480-984-0032 to register. Limited to 20 participants. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Meet at the Archery Range. Note: this class is also offered at 10:30 am.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Desert 101 – 11 a.m.** Learn some tips on hiking, camping and the use of equipment while you are visiting the desert southwest. This a comprehensive look at making your excursions into the desert wilderness safe and mostly worry free. Nature Center classroom.

**Park: White Tank Mountain Regional Park**

**Making Robin Hoods - Archery 101 - 1 p.m.**

Learn to shoot a recurve, compound, and cross bow. This 1.5 hour class is the first step in learning archery. Wear comfortable clothes, closed toe shoes and bring some cold water. All equipment is provided. Call 602-372-7460 x 202, and leave name, phone number, and how many people wishing to attend. Ranger will call to let you know if there is room in the class (only 12 people per class). Follow the "Archery 101" signs from the main contact station to the group campground.

**Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park**

**Having Fun With Archery - Archery Fun Shoot – Group Camp – 11 a.m.**

If you already have your Archery 101 card, you can participate in these fun games. There are no limit to the people who show up, as long as they have their archery 101 cards. We will run everyone through each contest. Come have fun and you might even win something. No need to sign up - just show up. Group camp area - all equipment provided, must have Archery 101 card to participate. Bring some cold drinks and your sun screen.

**Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park**

**05 Welcome to the Wild West: An** Introduction to the Sonoran Desert – 10 a.m. We in Arizona have bragging rights that we live in the 'wild west', with cactus that 'jump', bugs that sting, and snakes that rattle. But just how dangerous is the desert, really? Join Ranger Amy for a 'hands-on' myth-busting guided walk on the unique flora and fauna that make up this place we call the Sonoran Desert. Meet a real giant desert hairy scorpion, and finally find out just what lives down in those mysterious desert holes. Meet at the North Trail Trailhead.

**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

**06 The Desert Grocery Store – 10 a.m.** The Sonoran Desert is a virtual grocery store and pharmacy... if you know where

to look. See (and sample) some of what people used to eat before grocery stores came to Phoenix, and find out which ones are still consumed. Try a chocolate chip cookie made with mesquite flour, or a cracker with prickly pear jelly, along this easy, 2 mile stroll. Meet at the North Trail Trailhead.

**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**



**Archery 101 – 10 a.m.** For those who completed our "Archery 101" class, this class will take you to the next level! Participants will learn about field target archery, discover how to improve their accuracy, and enjoy some friendly

competition. Equipment will be provided.

Participants must be graduates of our "Archery 101" class. This class is open to ages 8 and up. Minors must be accompanied by an adult. Advanced registration is required. Please call the park at 480-984-0032 to register. Limited to 20 participants. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Meet at the Archery Range.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**Overton Trail Hike – 10 a.m.** Ranger Mark will lead you on this hike which offers spectacular scenic vistas from the upper Sonoran Desert to the valleys below! This moderate 3.5 mile hike will leave from the Nature Center. Bring a hat, sturdy shoes, and plenty of water!

**Park: Cave Creek Regional Park**

**09 Desert Photography Walk – 9 a.m.** Want to learn how to take beautiful photos in a desert environment?

Whatever your level, this one-mile walk along the Merkle Trail will give you lots of useful tips and techniques! Our instructor, Steven Lewis, has years of experience as a photographer. The Merkle Trail is barrier-free and offers universal access. The hard-smooth surface of this trail will accommodate wheelchairs. Please bring water, hats, and your camera. Location: Area 6.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**13 Ride With The Ranger – 3 p.m.** Join the Ranger and Cave Creek Trailrides as we introduce you to the amazing wonders of Cave Creek Park and the Sonoran Desert on horseback! This will be a 1 hour ride where we will introduce you to the nature and landscape as you have never seen it before. Registration is required for this fee based program. \*\*\*\* Please call Cave Creek Trailrides at 623-742-6700 to sign up\*\*\*

**Park: Cave Creek Regional Park**





**15 Archery 101 – 9 a.m.** Interested in archery? Sign up for this fun "Archery 101" program. Participants experience a fun and safe basic introduction to recreational and international – style target archery. Equipment is provided. This archery program is open to anyone ages 8 and older. Please bring water and wear closed-toe shoes. \*\*\*\*\*Advanced registration is required. Limited to 20 participants. Please contact Ranger Mark at 623-465-0431 202 to register.

**Park: Cave Creek Regional Park**

**16 Making Robin Hoods – Archery 101 – 9 a.m.** Learn to shoot a recurve, compound, and cross bow. This 1.5 hour class is the first step in learning archery. Wear comfortable clothes, closed toe shoes and bring some cold water. All equipment is provided. Call 602-372-7460 x 202 , and leave name, phone number, and how many people wishing to attend. Ranger will call to let you know if there is room in the class (only 12 people per class). Follow the "Archery 101" signs from the main contact station to the group campground.

**Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park**

**Making Robin Hoods – Archery 101 – 11 a.m. -** Learn to shoot a recurve, compound, and cross bow. This 1.5 hour class is the first step in learning archery. Wear comfortable clothes, closed toe shoes and bring some cold water. All equipment is provided. Call 602-372-7460 x 202 , and leave name, phone number, and how many people wishing to attend. Ranger will call to let you know if there is room in the class (only 12 people per class). Follow the "Archery 101" signs from the main contact station to the group campground.

**Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park**

**Practice Your Shot – Open Archery @ Group Camp Area – 2 p.m.** If you already have your Archery 101 card, come join us and practice your archery skills during this open range time (ends at 4PM). Group camp area - all equipment provided, must have Archery 101 card to participate.

**Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park**

**All About Hiking Safety – 12 p.m.** What are the special challenges that hikers face? What are the things you need to know to make your hikes safe? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about hiking safety, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares important tips to help you stay safe on your hikes. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**22 Clay Mine – Open House – 10 a.m.** Join us for an adventure as we explore our Clay Mine! This will be an easy 2 mile hike (round trip). Once inside, we'll discuss the history of this mine and learn how its contents were used to cure all ailments. We will supply the hard hats. Please bring water, a flashlight and sturdy shoes. Meet at the Nature Center parking lot and follow the signs to the mine. This is an "open house" format, so you may come and go at your convenience during the designated time slot. The mine will be closed promptly at 2 pm.

**Park: Cave Creek Regional Park**

**30 Interpretive Hike along the Scenic Trail – 10 a.m.** The Scenic Trail is a 4.8 mile ridgeline hike with great views of mountain ranges in all directions. Ranger Amy will point out an ancient petroglyph, a crested saguaro, and of course, birds and any wildlife along this moderate, 2 ½ hour walk. Bring your out-of-town guests and your camera. Please wear hiking shoes and bring plenty of water. Meet at the Trailhead Staging Area.

**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

**Just For Kids – Kid vs. Wild – 1:30 p.m.** Kids, what would you do if you got lost in the desert? This fun program will teach you what to do! You will learn how to find your way, signal for help, build an emergency shelter, and avoid desert dangers. This program involves a 1-mile hike and is designed for kids ages 7-12. Kids must be accompanied by an adult. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Area 6.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

## PLANTS

### NOVEMBER

**15 Amazing Plants of our Desert – 9 a.m.** What are the names of the unique plants that grow in our desert? How do

they survive (and thrive!) in such a harsh environment? Discover the special strategies of these incredible plants when you join our Interpretive Ranger, Ranger B, for this quarter-mile stroll along the scenic Desert Hawk Trail. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**17 Walk on the Wild Side – 10 a.m.** Join Ranger Mark for a "Walk on the Wild Side"! We will meet at the Nature Center and go for a leisurely, mile long hike, stopping along the way to look at and discuss the various plants and animals that we may encounter. Bring plenty of water, sturdy shoes, and a hat. Also, bring a picnic lunch to enjoy, afterwards. And don't forget your camera!

**Park: Cave Creek Regional Park**

**25 Amazing Plants of Our Desert – 1:30 p.m.** What are the names of the unique plants that grow in our desert? How do they survive (and thrive!) in such a harsh environment? Discover the special strategies of these incredible plants when you join our Interpretive Ranger, Ranger B, for this one-mile stroll along the scenic Merkle Trail. The hard-smooth surface of this trail will accommodate wheelchairs and strollers. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Area 6

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**30 Super Saguaro Walk – 9 a.m.** Why do saguaros grow arms? Can you estimate the age of a saguaro? Can you drink water from one? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about saguaros, then this 1-mile stroll along the scenic Merkle Trail is for you! The hard-smooth surface of this trail will accommodate wheelchairs and strollers. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Area 6.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

## DECEMBER

**01 Desert Washes Walk – 9 a.m.** Come discover the fascinating world of a desert wash. This hike will feature the exploration of Cottonwood Wash, a major tributary of Cave Creek. Along the way we will discuss desert washes and mesas and how the ecosystems differ. Long pants and sturdy shoes are recommended. No dogs on this hike please.

**Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area**



**06 Plants of the White Tanks – 10 a.m.** This is an informative hike that talks about how the desert flora survives in such a harsh environment. It is a short ¼ mile walk with a lot of information. This may not be of interest to young children. No dogs please. Meet-Area 4 lot at 9:45 a.m.

**Park: White Tank Mountain Regional Park**

**The Desert Grocery Store – 10 a.m.** The Sonoran Desert is a virtual grocery store and pharmacy... if you know where to look. See (and sample) some of what people used to eat before grocery stores came to Phoenix, and find out which ones are still consumed. Try a chocolate chip cookie made with mesquite flour, or a cracker with prickly pear jelly, along this easy, 2 mile stroll. Meet at the North Trail Trailhead.

**Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park**

**Cool Cactus Walk – 1:30 p.m.** What are the names of the cacti that grow in our desert? How do they survive (and thrive!) in such a harsh environment? Discover amazing facts about these incredible plants when you join our Interpretive Ranger for a scenic stroll along the quarter-mile Desert Hawk Trail. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**09 Quartz Trail Hike – 9 a.m.** Join us for adventure as we explore the Quartz Trail! This will be a moderate 3.5 mile hike. Coni Grossman will be your guide. Bring water, a hat, & sturdy shoes. Meet at the Nature Center.

**Park: Cave Creek Regional Park**

**16 Introducing the Desert – 9 a.m.** Are you new to the desert? Are you wondering what is out there in this amazing land? We will be taking a short 1 mile hike on our Jasper trail and talk about all the amazing plants and animals that live in the desert. Once we are done you will

never see the desert the same again! Meet at the Go John Trailhead.

**Park: Cave Creek Regional Park**

**20 Super Saguaro Walk – 10 a.m.** Why do saguaros grow arms? Can you estimate the age of a saguaro? Can you drink water from one? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about saguaros, then this quarter-mile stroll along the scenic Desert Hawk Trail is for you! Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

**22 Sonoran Desert 101 - 9 a.m.** Join interpretive ranger Kevin Smith on a hike through the beautiful upland desert vegetation in Spur Cross. Learn about the ecology of the Sonoran desert and spend an enjoyable two hours of hiking slowly and enjoying nature. We encourage you to bring binoculars or a camera.

**Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area**

**Amazing Plants Walk - 1:30 p.m.** What are the names of the unique plants that grow in our desert? How do they survive (and thrive!) in such a harsh environment? Discover the special strategies of these incredible plants when you join our Interpretive Ranger, Ranger B, for this quarter-mile stroll along the scenic Desert Hawk Trail. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

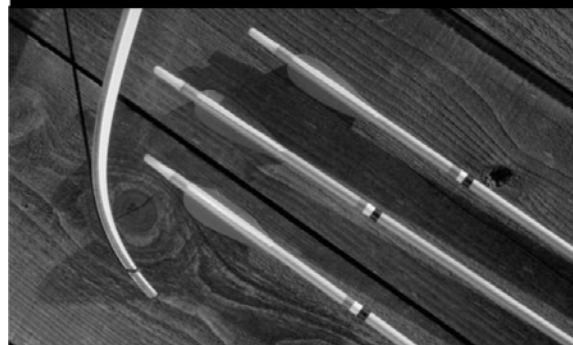
**23 Flora of Spur Cross - 9 a.m.** Spur Cross ranges in elevation from 2400' in the Cave Creek drainage to over 3900' at the summit of Elephant Mountain. And contains a broad diversity of plant life. Join us on this easy two hour hike on the Metate Trail as we take a look at some of the common plants of the conservation area. (easy)

**Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area**

**Desert Edibles Walk – 1:30 p.m.** How have people survived off the land for thousands of years? Which desert plants are edible and when are they edible? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about desert edibles, then this walk is for you! Join Ranger B on this quarter-mile stroll along the Desert Hawk Trail as he shares some useful facts about our edible desert plants. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center.

**Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park**

## CURIOUS ABOUT HOW TO SHOOT A BOW?



Sign up for one of our many  
**ARCHERY 101**  
courses today!

## CONCESSIONAIRES

The Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department partners with private organizations to bring visitors various recreational activities. Below are the partners you may contact directly for more information:

### Ball Fields

- Victory Lane Sports Complex – (623) 581-6000

### Golf Courses

- The 500 Club – (623) 492-9500
- Tres Rios Golf Course at Estrella Mountain – (623) 932-3714

### Horseback Riding

- Cave Creek and Estrella Mountain Horse Trailrides – (623) 742-6700

### Marina

- Scorpion Bay Marina – (928) 501-2628
- Dillon's Restaurant – (928) 501-2227

### Shooting Range

- Buckeye Hills Public Shooting Range – (623) 474-5004

### Karting

- Phoenix Kart Racing Assoc. – (623) 551-2747
- Arizona Karting Association – (602) 919-9757

### Paintball

- Fort Adobe Paintball Complex – (602) 493-0318

### Water Activities

- Wet 'n' Wild – Phoenix – (602) 201-2000

## VOLUNTEERS & PARK HOSTS

The Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department would not be a reality without the contributed hours by this highly-prized group of individuals. Volunteers from around the Phoenix metropolitan area donate their time and energy in all of the parks at the contact stations, visitor centers, and campsites. Park hosts are another unique group of individuals who come to Phoenix from all over North America and donate thousands of hours a year to the Maricopa County Parks.

If you are only able to volunteer for a couple of hours at a time or serve as a Park Host for a full season, we welcome the opportunity to talk with you about how we can work together. For more information on the types of volunteer and hosting opportunities within the Department, **click here to review the Volunteer Handbook.**

For information on vacancies and opportunities in specific parks, please contact the park you're interested in at the numbers listed below:

- **Adobe Dam Regional Park.** The park is currently accepting applications for **summer hosts and volunteers**. Please phone 623.465.0431 for additional information.
- **Buckeye Hills Regional Park.** Please forward your resume to [estrellapark@mail.maricopa.gov](mailto:estrellapark@mail.maricopa.gov).
- **Cave Creek Regional Park.** The park is currently accepting applications for **summer hosts and volunteers**. Please phone 623.465.0431 for additional information.
- **Desert Outdoor Center at Lake Pleasant.** The park is currently accepting applications for **summer hosts and volunteers**. Please phone (602) 372-7460 for additional information.
- **Estrella Mountain Regional Park.** The park is currently accepting applications for **summer hosts and volunteers**. Please forward your resume to [estrellapark@mail.maricopa.gov](mailto:estrellapark@mail.maricopa.gov) or call (623) 932-3811.
- **McDowell Mountain Regional Park.** The park is currently accepting applications for **summer hosts and volunteers**. For additional information, please contact the park at (480) 471-0173.
- **San Tan Mountain Regional Park.** The park is currently accepting applications for **summer hosts and volunteers**. Please forward your resume to [santanpark@mail.maricopa.gov](mailto:santanpark@mail.maricopa.gov) or contact (480) 655-5554 for additional information.

- **Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area.** At this time, we do not have host sites in the conservation area. Please check back at a later date.
- **Usery Mountain Regional Park.** The park is currently accepting applications for **summer hosts and volunteers**. Please forward your resume to [userypark@mail.maricopa.gov](mailto:userypark@mail.maricopa.gov) or contact (480) 984-0032 for additional information.
- **White Tank Mountain Regional Park.** The park is currently accepting applications for **summer hosts and volunteers**. Please forward your resume to [whitetankpark@mail.maricopa.gov](mailto:whitetankpark@mail.maricopa.gov) or contact (623) 935-2505 for additional information.

### How to Apply:

The Parks and Recreation Department is eager to provide you with the information that you need to make your experience with us a positive one. For additional information, call (602) 506-2930 or contact the park of your choice directly. If you are ready to join a truly special group, click on a button below to download an application!

## PROTECT-A-PARK

It's time to get involved and give your land a hand! Maricopa County is proud to be home of one of the largest regional park systems in the United States.

The breathtaking flora and fauna and the vast array of interpretive programs rank these extraordinary parks among the most beautiful places in Arizona.

The Protect-A-Park program offers businesses, individuals, and clubs an opportunity to volunteer their time and skills to enhance a County park area that is near and dear to their heart.

Whether time is spent painting, repairing or simply picking up litter, together we can preserve this amazing park system for all to enjoy. Get involved and give your land a hand! Sign up to Protect-A-Park near you at...

- |                         |                         |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| • Cave Creek            | (623) 465-0431          |
| • Desert Outdoor Center | (602) 372-7470 ext. 200 |
| • Estrella Mountain     | (623) 932-3811          |
| • Lake Pleasant         | (602) 372-7460 ext. 200 |
| • McDowell Mountain     | (480) 471-0173          |
| • San Tan Mountain      | (480) 655-5554          |
| • Spur Cross Ranch      | (480) 488-6601          |
| • Usery Mountain        | (480) 984-0032          |
| • White Tank            | (623) 935-2505          |



## SOCIAL MEDIA

### FACEBOOK



Maricopa County's Parks and Recreation Department is pleased to announce the launch of their Facebook accounts. That's right, even AFTER you've left the park, you can still see what happened the night before at a program, learn more about the Sonoran Desert and connect with your favorite interpretive ranger! Below is a list of the accounts you can either "friend" or "like" us at:

Maricopa County Parks General Account –  
[www.facebook.com/maricopacountyparks](http://www.facebook.com/maricopacountyparks)

Park Accounts –

- [Cave Creek Regional Park](#)
- [Desert Outdoor Center at Lake Pleasant](#)
- [Estrella Mountain Regional Park](#)
- [Lake Pleasant Regional Park](#)
- [McDowell Mountain Regional Park](#)
- [San Tan Mountain Regional Park](#)
- [Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area](#)
- [Usery Mountain Regional Park](#)
- [White Tank Mountain Regional Park](#)

### VIRTUAL TOURS

What's that...you don't have time to visit the parks in person? Have you ever thought of taking a virtual tour via the Parks YouTube account? Whether you want to check out the Pump Track at McDowell Mountain Regional Park, a beautiful display of spring wildflowers or the Waterfall Trail at White Tank Mountain Regional Park, the site has something for everyone!

[http://www.youtube.com/user/maricopacountyparks?feature=results\\_main](http://www.youtube.com/user/maricopacountyparks?feature=results_main)



Back by popular demand...the Fall Challenge has returned! Last year we challenged you to hike 100-miles in three months and you rose to the challenge. This year, you'll be asked to solve puzzles, participate in activities, and truly experience the beauty of the Sonoran desert. So round up your friends, print out your bingo cards and prepare for a fun fall of outings. To learn more, visit:

<http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/fallchallenge.aspx>